

Spring 2001

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE 105
RESEARCH METHODS

Instructor: Mona Lynch
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Class meetings: T 5:30-8:15 PM--MH 523
Office hours: T 2:00-5:30 PM; Th. 9:00-10:30 AM

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

This course will systematically cover the basic elements of social science research methodology, with an emphasis on criminal justice research. We will learn about the necessary components of research methods to understand, critique, design, and carry out sound research. This class will cover: critically reading research on crime and justice issues, conceiving a workable criminal justice research question, selecting an appropriate method for the research question, designing a criminal justice research study, ethical issues faced when conducting criminal justice research, and how to make sense of research findings.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

In addition to participating in the class discussions and activities on Tuesdays, you need to: complete the required readings prior to the class for which they are assigned; complete a cumulative research project that will be the compilation of several interrelated assignments done throughout the semester, and take three in-class objective format exams that will cover the readings and lecture materials. The required projects can be on any of a range of topics related to the criminal justice, depending upon your interests.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Maxfield, Michael and Earl Babbie (1998). Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology, 2nd Edition. West/Wadsworth Publishing.

GRADING, MISSED EXAM & LATE ASSIGNMENTS POLICY

Only legitimately excused missed exams can be made up. My policy for what constitutes legitimate excuses will be outlined during our first class meeting. Only under extreme and unavoidable emergency circumstances will you be able to

make up an exam for a legitimate excuse if you have not given notice of your absence before the actual scheduled exam period. In other words, don't report your absence after the exam was given, unless you can document your complete and total inability to do so before the exam. You may only make up 1 scheduled exam during the semester, so if you are not in attendance for more than 1 scheduled exam, you will receive zero points for any additional missed exams. Missed exams #1 & #2 will be taken on the final day of class, May 15, during the last half of the class period. The make-up exams will be in a different format than the original exams. The missed final period will be arranged if necessary, and will also be in a different format than the original final.

The assignment / final project deadlines are firm deadlines. Each day that your assignment is late will result in a 5 point deduction from your grade for that assignment. Again, only legitimate excuses as outlined in the first class meeting will be accepted to avoid the late penalty. Computer / printer breakdowns are generally NOT legitimate excuses. Your final grade for the course will be based upon your performances on the in-class exams, the assignments, and the final project, as follows:

Exam #1:	200 points maximum
Exam #2:	200 points maximum
Exam #3:	200 points maximum
Assignments:	50 points <u>each</u> maximum x 5 assignments
Final project:	150 points maximum
Total possible:	1000 points

A range = 900 points or above

B range = 800-899 points

C range = 700-799 points

D range = 600-699 points

F = 599 points or below

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS / ASSIGNMENTS / DUE DATES:

WEEK 1 (January 30): Introduction to asking and answering research questions.

Read: By Tuesday, 1-30: Chapter 1; handout.

WEEK 2 (February 6): Theory and causation.

Read: By Tuesday, 2-6: Chapter 2 & 3, to bottom of p. 55.

Assignment #1--your responses to the handout--due Tuesday, February 6.

WEEK 3 (February 13): Introduction to research design.

Read: By Tuesday, 2-13: Chapter 4, Appendix A.

Assignment #2--your research question--due Tuesday, February 13.

WEEK 4 (February 20): From concepts to measures.

Read: By Tuesday, 2-20: Chapter 5.

WEEK 5 (February 27): Measurement issues in criminal justice research.

Read: By Tuesday, 2-27: Chapter 6. BRING ONE RESEARCH ARTICLE TO CLASS.

Assignment #3--the relevant literature list--due Tuesday, February 27

WEEK 6 (March 6): EXAM #1

WEEK 7 (March 13): Ethics and research; Introduction to data collection.

Read: By Tuesday, 3-13: Chapters 8 & 9 (note switch in chapter order).

WEEK 8 (March 20): Experimental designs.

Read: By Tuesday, 3-20: Chapter 7 (note switch in chapter order).

Assignment #4--the relevant literature synthesis--due Tuesday, March 20

WEEK 9 (March 27): **SPRING BREAK--NO CLASSES**

WEEK 10 (April 3): Survey research.

Read: By Tuesday, 4-3: Chapter 10.

WEEK 11 (April 10): Field research.

Read: By Tuesday, 4-10: Chapter 11.

WEEK 12 (April 17): EXAM #2

WEEK 13 (April 24): RESEARCH DESIGN PROJECT WORK

**NO FORMAL CLASS THIS WEEK--REQUIRED INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS
ON RESEARCH PROJECTS**

WEEK 14 (May 1): Unobtrusive methods.

Read: By Tuesday, 5-1: Chapter 12.

Assignment #5--the research design--due Tuesday, May 1

WEEK 15 (May 8): Program evaluation and policy analysis.

Read: By Tuesday, 5-8: Chapter 13.

WEEK 16 (May 15): Making sense of findings; Communicating research findings.

EXAM 1 & 2 MAKE-UPS; FINAL PROJECTS

Read: By Tuesday, 5-15: Chapter 14 and Appendix C.

FINAL PROJECT DUE: Tuesday, May 15 in class.

Final exam during scheduled exam period: Tuesday, May 22, 5:30-7:00 PM.

(NOTE EARLIER FINISH TIME)